Oklahoma Chess Monthly

SEPTEMBER 2021

Chess News and Chess History for Oklahoma

The Harrington Brothers. LM Robert, NM Steve

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- IM Donaldson Deep Dive
- R. Amburgy's GOTM
- Plus News Bites, Game of the Month, Puzzles, Top 25 List, Tournament Reports, and more.

Steve Wharry ConSat Classic: Another High Turnout

by Tom Braunllich

Exemplifying a trend across the country of good turnouts with lots of new unrated players, the annual tournament to honor Steve Wharry saw 48 players, compared to the usual number of 35 or so for a ConSat tournament in the past.

Played on two consecutive Saturdays in early August, the Open Section was won impressively by expert James Long, with 3½ points out of 4. ($200). Lowest-rated Jacob R. Schultz (1451) had a great event, scoring 3-1 to tie for 2nd place with Matt Dalthorp (2015) and David Luscomb (1995).

David Morgan (1676) won the Reserve Section with 3½ points. ($125). Adam Bulleigh (1725) was clear 2nd in the hard-fought middle section.

The Novice Section was, typically now, the

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largest section, with 23 players, two-thirds of whom were unrated. Not all the unrated players were kids either; there were several adults new to tournaments, perhaps inspired by *The Queen's Gambit* movie.

Young William Lin (926) scored 4-0 to take 1st place with excellent play. Another talented youngster, Rishi Rathi (850), scored 3½ for clear 2nd. Colton Ward, Marshall Berry, and Juan D. Ibarra (all adults) were unrated players who scored and excellent 3-1 to tie for 3rd place.

James Long's best game was a fine win over Arkansas expert David Phillips. He showed and explained the gambit game at the Midtown Chess Club in Tulsa the very next day. I'm going to save this game for next month's issue.

Full crosstables are here:
http://www.uschess.org/msa/XtblMain.php?202108140452-12374730

The TD was Tom Braunlich, assisted by Ish Kissinger.

Above: James Long.

Above: Viraj Singh, William Lin (behind)

Left: The Playing Hall

Below: Assistant TD Ish Kissinger.

Okie NM Robert Harrington Gets "Life Master" Title — *For the SECOND Time!*

National Master Robert Harrington, of Stillwater, wrote us with this odd story.

"In 1997 I was surprised to get a Life Master certificate in the mail. I felt that this had to be a mistake so I contacted them. They informed me that they now had two ways of obtaining the L.M. title. The original way and a new norm based way. I had met the requirements under the new norm system. I hung up the phone with confused emotions: elation, shock, etc. …"

"Many years later, around 2016, I noticed that it did not show that I was awarded the L.M. title on the USCF website. Even though I am retired from tournament chess I still wanted it to have an indicator my accomplishment, so I contacted them. They said the norm system had been discarded! Thus…it will not show my L.M. title."

"Not being a quitter I tried again! This time I had a former USCF president help me. Jim Berry tried but they would not budge. I must say the USCF officials were always very nice, but said they could not help me. I thought to myself it was not that big of a deal. I love this game and I have the highest regard for the USCF. So I moved on."

"Fast forward to 2020. I went to my mailbox and there it was. A letter from the USCF congratulating me on my achievement! Enclosed was another L.M. certificate! Once again I was confused, elated and shocked!"

Robert was so good they had to give him a *Double Life Master!*

The strongest brother players in Oklahoma history —

LM Robert Harrington (seated left) and brother NM Steve Harrington, playing FM Miles Ardaman in a simul in 1988.

Oklahoma's latest NM performed well at the Denker tournament of national high school champions during the U.S. Open. Here he beat a 2460-player and was tied for first place, before losing to 2400s in each of the next two rounds. Still, it is one of the best performances at this prestigious event ever for an Okie and of this game he could be well pleased.

Shlyakhtenko, Robert (2462)
Amburgy, Ryan (2215) [A17]
2021 Denker H.S. National Championship (4), 09.08.2021 *[Notes by Braunlich]*
1.Nf3 d5 2.e3 Nf6 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3

White can transpose into a Queens Gambit at any time with d2-d4 but perhaps he is hoping to confuse his lower-rated opponent with his tricky move order. Actually this system for white has become popular recently.

4...a6!? 5.b3

Note that if 5.d4?! dxc4 6.Bxc4 b5 7.Bd3 Bb7 the game reaches a Meran type position where black has not had to play the move c7-c6. He is essentially a tempo up when he later goes ...c5 in one move, and black's scores well with this line. Instead white fianchettos.

5...c5

One of the points of white playing fianchettoing without d4 is the long diagonal is open and he can try to attack the black kingside with a quick g2-g4. For example, the game Nepomniatchi - Anand 2017 went 5...Bd6 6.Bb2 0-0 7.g4 and white eventually won. Susan Polgar has also played this gambit.

6.cxd5 exd5 7.d4 Nc6 8.Bb2 Bg4

Ryan is up on his theory. This is the main move here. As I understand it, black intends to chop on f3 and then swap pawns on d4, after which white has to recapture with the pawn. In that position the B on b2 will be somewhat dead, blocked by its own pawn. If white wants to avoid this and leave black with an isolated queen's pawn, he has to capture on c5 now, which gifts black a free tempo for his other bishop's development.]

9.Be2

More combative seems to keep the position open with 9.dxc5 Bxc5 10.Be2 0-0 11.0-0 Qd6 Black has ideas of moving his B to c7 for threats against white's king, and otherwise the position is somewhat standard IQP play.

9...Bxf3! 10.Bxf3 cxd4 11.exd4 Bb4 12.0-0 0-0 = 13.Na4!?

When I first saw this game I thought black had equalized and this knight excursion was dubious. But the computer says it is best and keeps a tiny edge for white (+0.2).

13...Re8

[A previous master game went: 13...Bd6 14.Rc1 Qc7 15.g3 Rad8 16.Re1 and white was better, but it ended a draw in: Anwesh,U (2386) - Punin,A (2259) Lvov 2016.]

14.Nc5 Ne4!?

This aggressive move must have annoyed white.

15.a3?!

Sometimes aggression pays off when the opponent backs down from complications and seeks something that appears clearer. But now Ryan gets an edge. 15.Nxb7 Qb6 16.Nc5 Bxc5 17.dxc5 Qxc5 18.Rc1 Qd6 19.Re1 Rad8 - White might be slightly better but black is solid.

15...Bxc5 16.dxc5 Qg5

Maybe in an endgame white would be better, but for now the pawn on d5 is not weak. It is

dangerous, and supports the aggressive N on e4 and other black attacking ideas.

17.Bxe4?!

I think this is an example of the disadvantage the higher-rated player has when he has to win against a good opponent. He has to avoid variations that look drawish. So if:

- 17.Re1 Nxc5 18.Qxd5 Qxd5 19.Bxd5 But this would be a very drawish position.
- 17.b4 Nd2! 18.Bc1 Nxf3+ 19.Qxf3 Qe5 20.Bd2 Nd4. So he trades for black's well-posted N, and keeps an imbalance, but it is Ryan who gets the initiative.

17...Rxe4! 18.Qd3 Rae8 19.Rad1 d4

You need only look at the relative activity of the pieces now to see who has the advantage.

20.b4 Qd5! [The computer prefers ...h5, but centralizing the queen is very strong. Karpov was famous for getting positions like black has here, with centralized pieces radiating power in all directions. Note that black's Q indirectly is targeting the g2 square: threat ...Rg4 etc.]

21.Qg3 h5! [Again threatening ...Rg4.]

22.f3? [22.h3 R8e6! going to g6 renews black's threats; 22.Qf3 is probably best, but the 2400-player probably saw scary variations like this: 22...Ne5 23.Qxh5 Rg4! 24.Qh3 Re6 etc. and started to panic.]

22...Re2! [Obvious, but note it is logical too, targeting the two weaknesses in white's position (B on b2, pawn on g2).]

23.Bc1 d3 [Black is winning.]

24.Qd6 Qa2 [No trades!]

25.Bf4 [25.Qg3 to defend g2 loses to 25...d2.]

25...Rxg2+ 26.Kh1 Rg6 27.Rd2 Qxa3 28.Qxd3

28... Qxb4!

Take note of this move too. A lot of players on the verge of beating a much stronger opponent would be excited and looking for a simple way to proceed. In this case, black could have swapped queens to reach an ending that is probably winning. That's how you end up allowing the opponent to escape! Be brave and keep pressing! Ryan doesn't let him off the hook.

29.Bd6 Qh4 [Targeting white's weak back rank as well as g2.]

30.Qb1 Qh3 31.Rdf2 b5! 32.Qa2 Qh4

There are lots of good moves here, but this one sets a nice trap, and white's hopes of counterplay against the a-pawn are dashed.

33.f4 [Trap: 33.Qxa6? Qxf2 34.Rxf2 Re1+]

33...a5 34.Re2 Rxe2 35.Qxe2 Nd4 [Finally the blockader knight enters the fray now that a killer role for it is spotted. It's going to f5.]

36.Qe8+

[36.Qf2 Qd8! threatening ...Qa8+ would have been spectacular. 37.h3 Nf5 38.Rg1 Rxg1+ 39.Kxg1 Nxd6 40.cxd6 Qxd6]

36...Kh7 37.Qd7 Ne2 38.Rd1 0-1

[White resigned as 38...Qf2 is mating. Very nice game by Ryan, who made beating a 2400 look easy!]

By IM John Donaldson

REVIEW: A Full Line of Books for 2021 by Thinkers Publishing

(Ed. Note – IM Donaldson provides us with IN-DEPTH information on many new books from one of the most interesting publishers. Good stuff!)

Part One: Eight Opening Books

The Belgium based company Thinkers Publishing (https://thinkerspublishing.com/) has recently come out with a number of fine books that are primarily, but not exclusively, devoted to opening theory.

Before examining these new titles a few general words about Thinkers Publishing. Although based in Belgium, most of its books are in English. Production qualities are uniformly high although the type of paper used can vary.

All books feature figurine algebraic notation. Note that most Thinkers Publishing books do not have an index. Instead, they have a table of contents for each chapter to help the reader navigate.

Sample pages for each book can be found at the Thinkers Publishing website.

Note the prices below are taken from https://www.uscfsales.com/ and lower ones may be found elsewhere including the Thinkers Publisher site which periodically runs sales.

- *Beat the Najdorf & Taimanov Sicilians!* by S.P. Sethuraman, 228 pages, $33.95
- *A Complete Repertoire for Black after 1.e4-e5!* by Yuriy Krykun, 276 pages, $38.95
- *A Feast of Chess in Time of Plague: Candidates Tournament 2020 - Part 1* by Vladimir Tukmakov, 154 pages, $38.95
- *The Modernized French Defense: Against the Tarrasch* by David Miedema, 215 pages, $33.95
- *The Modernized Marshall Attack* by Milos Pavlovic, $29.95, 232 pages, $30.95
- *The Modernized Modern Defense* by Daniel Fernandez, 374 pages, $37.95
- *The Modernized Nimzovich Defense* by Christian Bauer 1. e4 Nc6!, 261 pages, $38.95
- *Unconventional Approaches to Modern Chess: Rare Ideas for White by* Alexander Ipatov, 345 pages, $36.95

Those rated in the top ten to fifteen in the world have become very discriminating in what openings they play against fellow elite players. Against 1.e4 it's pretty much only 1…e5 and 1…c5, with the Berlin, Open Ruy and Marshall Attack in the former category and the Najdorf, Sveshnikov and Taimanov in the latter. Many of these are covered in the latest books by Thinkers Publishing.

The young Ukrainian author Yuriy Krykun's ***A Complete Opening Repertoire after 1.e4 e5!*** is one stop shopping for those wishing to play double king pawn as Black. He offers answers to all of White's choices after 1.e4 e5 including multiple answers against the Ruy Lopez. Krykun believes playing classically is the way to go and does not advocate for dubious lines that are tricky but unsound. His philosophy is made clear on page 115 where he writes about a line where White is able to deaden the position through early simplification:

I understand some of you might feel

TOP 25

For SEPT. 2021

Active Oklahoma Players

		This Month	Change	
1	Advait Patel	2537	0	
2	Howard Zhong	2302	0	
3	Ryan Amburgy	2240	35	
4	Tom Braunlich	2200	0	
5	Mark Hulsey	2153	-37	
6	David Zelnick	2137	0	
7	Anthony Paolercio	2080	0	
8	Veronika Zilajeva	2080	0	
9	Tom Patton	2076	-1	
10	Charles D Unruh	2073	-1	
11	James Long	2064	10	
12	Michael Nugent	2042	0	
13	Charles M Unruh	2024	0	
14	David Luscomb	2022	27	▲
15	Matt Dalthorp	2012	-3	▼
16	Jeff Colbert	2008	0	▼
17	Stephen Gehly	2000	0	▼
18	Logan Zachare	1959	0	▼
19	Wayne Hatcher	1926	0	▲
20	Jerry Casteel	1926	0	▲
21	Joe Dean Veal	1925	0	▲
22	Maxwell Barnes	1922	-54	▼
23	Harold Brown Jr.	1901	0	
24	Oscar Wang	1870	5	▲
25	Chris Dooley	1868	-20	▼

Player of the Month

ROBERT HARRINGTON

You get the Life Master title, you earn POTM. Robert is retired from tournament chess and lives in Stillwater.

disappointed about the possibility of a likely draw. Yet, I do not think that it is a concern. If your opponent is clearly weaker you can still win. If he is of your level or higher rated, he would not want to beg for a draw as White. And, even if you draw a weaker player occasionally, you will have many other fighting games in the other lines. Some players prefer the approach of fearing the draw, playing 1…g6 or something else and having a lousy position during the entire game. In my opinion, the best way of maximizing your chances to win is by equalizing immediately as opposed to going for a bad position hoping to create chances!

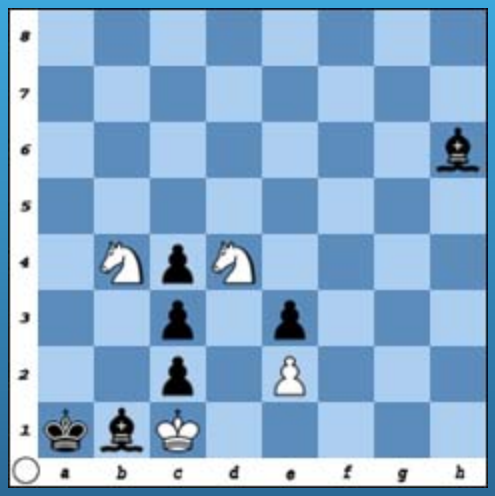
The centerpiece of Krykun's repertoire is his advocacy of the Open Ruy for Black but not in the variations you might think. After 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Nxe4 6.d4

he recommends 6…exd4 (the Riga Variation) and …6…Be7 which has been championed of later by Mamedyarov and several other top players. The former has the practical objection that it allows White a forced draw right out of the opening, but it is very easy to learn and White's advantage is not as significant as traditional theory holds.

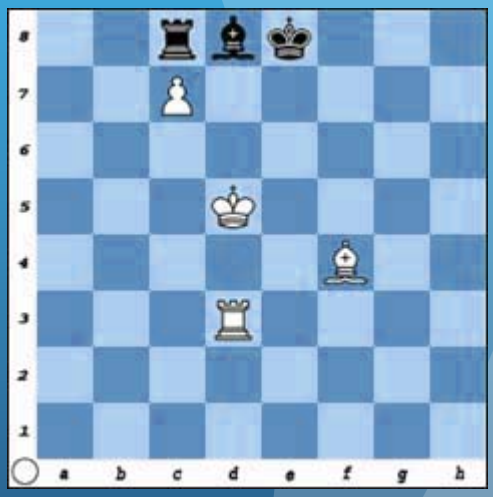
Unlike many Thinkers Publishing opening works, which are aimed at players 2000 on up, *A Complete Opening Repertoire after 1.e4 e5!* is aimed at a different market. While titled players will find some of Krykun's suggestions interesting this book is likely to appeal more to those rated between 1600 and 2300. Krykun writes:

PUZZLES

Answers Next Page



White to move and MATE in 3. (Easy)



WHITE to move and win. (Difficult)
From the recent GM events in St. Louis

One of the important issues players face – both relatively inexperienced ones at the beginning of their career as well as seasoned ones as they realize their chess craves change – is choosing an opening repertoire. As a player and a coach, I have seen many approaches to this question, both remarkable and mistaken. Some players believe that the opening is something to ignore, that everything is decided in the middlegame. Others think that studying opening traps is what wins games.

Some tend to follow their favorite world-class player's recommendations, while others like to sidestep well-known opening theory early on, preferring unpopular sidelines.

To me, opening choice is about all those decisions. I think that many openings are good; there are some dubious ones, but they can also yield formidable results overall or in specific situations if chosen and handled carefully.

I firmly believe that your opening repertoire should mostly be based on your playing style and other personal traits, such as memory and work ethic. It is important to evaluate yourself as well as your strengths and weaknesses properly in order to be able to build the right repertoire that would not only suit you well, but also improve your overall chess.

The little detail, though, is in the word "mostly". Namely, I firmly believe that there are a few classical, rock-solid openings with an impeccable reputation, such as 1.e4 e5 as a response to 1.e4 or the Queen's Gambit and Nimzo as an answer to 1.d4 that players of all styles and standards should try, no matter what their style is. This will enable players to learn, appreciate and practice some of the key chess values, such as the importance of space, lack of weaknesses, bad pieces, and comfortable development and so on – you name it.

1.e4 e5 is not just an opening. It is repertoire that represents our game as a whole. It is something players of all styles will enjoy due to

Answers to the Puzzles

(1) Black has no moves except with his bishops. If he moves the light-squared bishop, white mates with Nxc2. So only his dark squared bishop can move. Let's take advantage of this with 1. Ne6! And put him in zugzwang. Our knight dominates all the possible moves with his dark-squared B. After he moves it, we take it; then he has to move the other B and it's mate.

(2) First of all, don't capture the Bishop! The resulting endgame R+B vs R is a theoretical draw. Instead, white found a nice way to win, based upon mate threats to black's King:
1. Ke6!! Now if:
• 1… Bxc7 then 2. Rg3! leads to back rank mate. If 2…Kf8 3. Bh6+ Ke8 4. Rg8#
• 1… Rxc7 2. Bxc7 Bxc7 this R vs B is normally a draw, but not here with black's King up against the wall. White wins with 3. Ra3! and black can't avoid mate or loss of the B.

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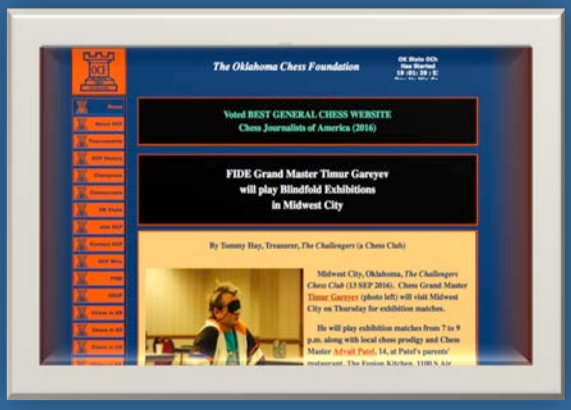
The Oklahoma Chess Foundation
Voted BEST GENERAL CHESS WEBSITE
Chess Journalists of America (2016)
FIDE Grand Master Timur Gareyev
will play Blindfold Exhibitions
in Midwest City

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… and more

the countless possibilities 1…e5 provides.

Also dealing with doubled king pawn opening from the Black perspective, albeit from a narrower perspective, is Serbian Grandmaster Milos Pavlovic's work ***The Modernized Marshall Attack***. As the title implies this is a work on Frank James Marshall's famous gambit that begins with the sequence 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 0-0 8.c3 d5

and indeed almost 100 pages are devoted to it, but that is not all that is covered. The Marshall is so respected, even at the very top, that various lines have been developed to sidestep it including 8.h3, 8.d3, 8.a4 and especially 8.d4. All are covered in this book with the latter having particular utility as it can often arise from attempts to avoid the main lines of the Ruy after 8.c3 d6 9.d4 (and not 9.h3). As a bonus Pavlovic provides a defense against the Exchange variation (4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.0-0 f6 6.d4 exd4) which is more traditional than Krykun's suggestion 5…Qf6.

The Sveshnikov Sicilian (1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e5) was Magnus Carlsen's main weapon in his 2018 World Championship match against Fabiano Caruana which speaks volumes for its soundness. It also says a lot that many top level GMs play the Rossolimo (3.Bb5) specifically to avoid the Sveshnikov. The young Dutch International Master Robert Ris has written the most up to date work on this dynamic defense covering all of White's tries including sidelines including lines considered second rate but still worthy of examination (6.Nf5, 6.Nf3, 6.Nb3 6.Nde2 and 6.Nxc6.

Ris is typically faithful to the main lines, but there are some exceptions one of which occurs in one of the sharpest variations after 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e5 6.Ndb5 d6 7.Bg5 a6 8.Na3 b5 9.Bxf6 gxf6 10.Nd5 f5 11.Bxb5 ab5 12.Nxb5

where the main line has always been 12…Ra4. Ris, unable to find an advantage for Black with that move, recommends the little-known 12…Bb7!? and backs up with extensive analysis.

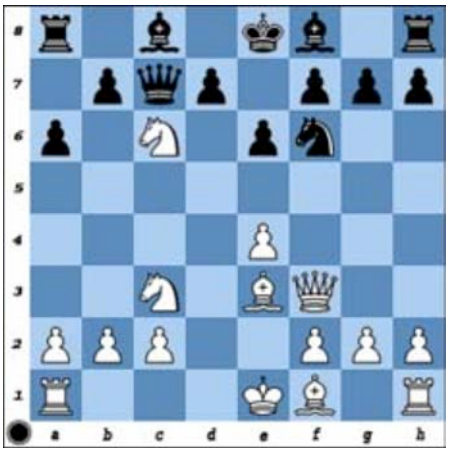
Like Krykun's book, *The Modernized Sveshnikov*, also has training exercises with solutions to test the reader's knowledge of the subject material. While Ris provides a complete repertoire after 5…e5 he does not examine the Anti-Sveshnikov move order 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 where Black can choose between 3…e5 or 3…g6. The latter, popular among top GMs who enjoy playing the Accelerated Dragon when the Maroczy Bind is no longer on the table, is well covered in Raja Panjwani's *The Hyper Accelerated Dragon* published by Thinkers Publishing.

Indian Olympiad S.P. Sethuraman's first book, ***Beat the Najdorf & Taimanov Sicilians!*** is an impressive work with much original analysis and new ideas. The book, written from White's perspective, covers 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.h3 versus the Najdorf and 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 5.Nc3 Qc7 6.Be3 a6 7.Qf3 against the Taimanov. The former, where White follows up with g4 and often castles

queenside, was championed over 60 years ago by Weaver Adams of *White to Play and Win* fame. Bobby Fischer used it to win a brilliancy against Miguel Najdorf that appears as game 40 in *My 60 Memorable Games*. Note that some of the lines Sethuraman examines (6.h3 e6 7.g4) transpose into the Keres Attack in the Scheveningen.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 5.Nc3 Qc7 6.Be3 a6 7.Qf3 is a new weapon against the Taimanov that is very flexible. In some lines the queen move is a prelude to attacking play while in others he offers a trade of queens seeking to exploit his lead in development and space advantage.

This book is topical. To give but one example after 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 5.Nc3 Qc7 6.Be3 a6 7.Qf3 Nf6 and now 8.Nxc6! (Sethuraman)



instead of 8.0-0-0 as played in Caruana-Shankland, Bundesliga 2019. Few games have been played with 8.Nxc6 but the author gives ten pages of analysis.

1.e4 e5 and 1.e4 c5 are not the only defenses on offer. French Grandmaster Christian Bauer, a perennially FIDE 2600+ rated player, known for his advocacy of lesser-known lines, follows up his previous well received books on 1…b6, the Scandinavian and the Philidor with ***The Modernized Nimzovich Defense 1.e4 Nc6!***

You might think from the title this book is on 1.e4 Nc6 2.d4 d5, the way Aron Nimzovich followed up on 1…Nc6. You would be only partly right. In fact, this book is not only on 1.e4 Nc6 2.d4 d5 but also 1.e4 Nc6 2.d4 e5, a favorite of the American master Alexander Kevitz (1902-1981). This latter line has not received a modern examination until now.

1.e4 Nc6 2.d4 e5 3.Nf3 exd4 4.Nxd4 forces Black into the Scotch, which Bauer analyzes, advocating for 4…Bb4+ (Krykun focuses on 4…Bc5). The author also covers the White sidelines 4.Bc4 and 4.c3.

One of the practical difficulties of making 1…Nc6 an independent answer to 1.e4 has always been 2.Nf3. Black can of course meet this with 2…e5, but this seems like a lot of trouble to sidestep the King's Gambit/Vienna and Bishop's Opening. The line 2…d6 3.d4 Bg4?! 4.d5 Ne5? 5.Nxe5! Bxd1 6. Bb5+ c6 7.dxc6 Qa5+ 8.Nc3 0-0-0 9.Nc4 is known to be crushing for White. Black can try to improve with 3…Nf6 4.Nc3 Bg4 but 5.Bb5, 5.Be3 and 5.Bg5 are all known to be better for White. Bauer's inspiration is 4…g6!?

with the idea of meeting 5.d5 with 5…Nb8 which he believes is not only fine for Black but offers the flexibility and richness to play for all three results. Note that many of the lines Bauer examines could also have arisen from 1…g6. Those looking to avoid huge amounts of theory will find *The Modernized Nimzovich Defense 1.e4 Nc6!* an interesting read.

English GM Daniel Fernandez's ***The Modernized Modern Defense***, the follow up to his well-received *The Modernized Caro Kann*, offers a complete repertoire against

both 1.e4 and 1.d4 utilizing the Pirc, Hippo and 1.d4 g6 2.c4 Bg7 3.Nc3 d6 4.e4 e5.

Fernandez makes the interesting observation that many Modern/Pirc players like to try to steer the game into Sicilian structures with a later …c5 and …cxd4. To that end he examines both 1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.Nf3 c5 and 1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.Nc3 c5, but both unfortunately fall short. The former to 4.dxc5 Qa5+ 5.c3 Qxc5 6.Na3! when Black has many ways to play, but none equalize.

Fernandez has plenty of interesting analysis on 3.Nc3 c5, a line Canadian players, Lawrence Day in particular, have dubbed the Pterodactyl. He does great work patching up several problematic line for Black, but then points out that 4.Be3! is very strong.

There have been books that have seriously examined 1,e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 Nf6 and 3….c5 4.exd5 Qxd5 from Black's point of view, but to this reviewer's knowledge Dutch International Master David Miedema's *The Modernized French: Against the Tarrasch* is the first book dedicated to 3…c5 4.exd5 exd5 5.Ngf3 Nc6 . The second of a planned three volume series on the French, this not only examines 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 c5 4.exd5 exd5 5.Ngf3 Nc6 6.Bb5 Bd6 7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.0-0 Nge7 9.Nb3 Bd6, popularized by Korchnoi in his 1974 Candidates Final and 1978 World Championship matches against Viktor Korchnoi, but also a number of alternative lines for both White and Black. These include 4.exd5 exd5 5.Bb5+, 4.exd5 exd5 5.Ngf3 Nf6, 4.Ngf3 and various lines based on…a6 and …Qe7+.

Unlike the seven other opening books reviewed here, **Unconventional Approaches to Modern Chess: Rare** Ideas for White by Alexander Ipatov is not focused on one specific opening. Instead it covers a variety of different lines which have two things in common: they are topical and come from queenside openings.

This includes numerous important lines in the Catalan including:

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.Nc3 Be7 5.g3 dxc4 6.Bg2 0-0 7.Ne5 Nc6 8.Bxc6 bxc6 9.Nxc6 Qe8 10.Nxe7+ Qxe7 11.Qa4 c5 12.dxc5 Qxc5 13.Be3 Qc7 14.0-0-0!?

As well as: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.g3 Be7 5.Bg2 0-0 6.0-0 dxc4 7.Ne5 Nc6 8.Bxc6 bxc6 9.Nxc6 Qe8 10.Nxe7+ Qxe7 11.b3!?

Also covered are variations in the Catalan via the Slav 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.g3 and Semi-Slav 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 e6 5.g3.

He covers a variety of systems involving early advances of White's g and h pawns including:

Queen's Gambit Declined - 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e3 0-0 6.Qc2 h6 7.Bxf6 Bxf6 8.h4.

The Accelerated Shirov-Shabalov Gambit - 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 e6 5.g4

He also covers Anti – Grunfeld systems with Ne2

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 d5 5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.e4 Nb6 7.Ne2 c5 8.d5 e6 9.0-0 0-0 10.Nec3

or 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6 4.Bg2 d5 5.e3

Unconventional Approaches to Modern Chess: Rare Ideas for White is full of a number of interesting ideas aimed primarily at players rated over 2200. This book doesn't offer a complete opening repertoire, but instead aims to provide possible solutions for White against a variety of Black defenses that have proved hard to crack.

Part Two: A pair of Improvement Books, a Game Collection and the Candidates Tournament:

- *The Modernized Sveshnikov* by Robert Ris, 336 pages, $37.95
- *My Chess World by David Navara,* pages 614 pages, $38.95
- *Sherlock's Method: The Working Tool for the Club Player* by Elshan Moradiabadi and Sabina Foisor, 447 pages, $38.95
- *Universal Chess Training by Wojciech Moranda*, 352 pages, $39.95

Sherlock's Method: The Working Tool for the Club Player by Elshan Moradiabadi and Sabina Foisor is an original work with a specific aim. Through its training program it seeks to get players ready to play in an over-the-board tournament in a few weeks. Unlike many other improvement books, it doesn't just focus on any one aspect of the game, but instead seeks to connect opening to middlegame to endgame. It also aims to teach the club player how to recognize what sort of positions require precise calculation and which depend on judgment. This book does this with hundreds of examples followed by exercises and detailed solutions. This is a great book for players 1800-2200.

Compared to the previous work, *Universal Chess Training* by Polish Grandmaster Wojciech Moranda is definitely aimed at a higher level of player. The three chapters in the book, each with thirty carefully selected exercises, followed by detailed solutions – many running several pages - are according to the author geared respectively for those rated 1600-1900, 1900-2200 with the last challenging even for Grandmasters. This reviewer would concur with the last series of exercises but even the other two may be a challenge for the ratings indicated, although the author makes a good point that the level of play has risen across the board the past decade.

Any player below 2400 FIDE can't fail to benefit from working their way through Sherlock's Method: The Working Tool for the Club Player and Universal Chess Training.

By now there is not a chess player on the planet who doesn't know the story of the 2020 Candidates Tournament, which was stopped halfway through in 2020 and finished a year later. What is clear is the first half of play produced many surprises and a number of interesting games.

Chess legend Vladimir Tukmakov, who has distinguished himself as a player, captain, trainer and author, weighs in on the aborted 2020 FIDE Candidates tournament in his book *A Feast of Chess in Time of Plague: Candidates Tournament 2020 - Part 1*. All 28 games are fully annotated by Tukmakov, but what readers may find most fascinating are his views of the performance of each of the players and his predictions for who is most likely to emerge as Magnus Carlsen's challenger with half the

competition completed. A number of crisp black and white photos round out a book that should prove interesting for a wide audience.

Last but not least is a book that should be on the list for best chess books of 2020. Although well known and respected by the chess cognoscenti, for the average player David Navara may be the strongest player they have never heard of. This would be a pity as the 35-year-old Czech Grandmaster, universally liked by his colleagues, has played many great games over the past two decades.

Navara, rated over 2700 FIDE for nearly twenty years and with a peak rating of 2751, is an elite player but one who has never quite reached the top ten. Often rated in the top 15 to 20 players in the world, he rarely plays in the biggest tournaments but thanks to the Czech super organizer *Pavel* Matocha he has met many of the world's best in matches.

Navara tells his story in My Chess World, a mammoth work of over 600 pages. Readers are treated to a beautifully produced book with a number of fine black and white photos that contains 64 well-annotated games. These games provide plenty of instruction as they include a large amount of instructive prose as well as concrete analysis. True to Navara's unpretentious nature among the games are a number of losses.

My Chess World is not just a games collection. Navara gives a frank account of his life as a chess pro. If one learns only one thing from this book it is the tremendous amount of work required to not only get to the top, but also maintain one's position.

"Would you mind terribly if I took back my last three moves?"

Submitted by
Shaun Graham

"Covid Cowboys" Wins National Prize

The Chess Journalists of America awarded the 2021 "Best Single Chess Photo" of the Year award to Jim Hollingsworth (our webmaster and guru) for this humorous photo from the Covid pandemic seclusion days last year:

"Covid Cowboys" was set up and taken last year at the "July Waco Chess Club's Sanitizer Swiss #1" Club President Matt Potts (in the cowboy hat) and TD Jason Howell (standing ready to flood everything with a bottle of hand sanitizer). On the far left is Club Secretary John DeVries. Jon Cromartie at far right.

Jim comments on the award, "I am astounded. ,,, I'm grateful to Jon Cromartie, John DeVries, Jason Howell, and Matthew Potts for helping me set up this shot. I recall it was a hot day and the air conditioning repair guys were due in a couple of days. A couple of the guys were wrapped up so tight in cellophane and plastic they could hardly breathe."

Carlsen Gets Mated in 8 Moves.

Watch this short video of world champ Carlsen getting checkmated in bullet chess because of too many 'pre-moves.' Hilarious, and it goes by so quick you can hardly follow it! Link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JeL2Ik9QaU

Tempest Tilt Clock

Here is a new chess clock that is not a clock at all really — it's a tilting mechanism that allows you to use your smart phone as the clock, using an app — but without having to use the touch screen. (See photo).

Instead it is a cradle for your phone combined with a rocking lever that can be pushed on both sides like the mechanism on top of chess clocks, which simply rocks the phone left and right. It uses the tilt-sensor in the phone to make a nice chess clock, and is less expensive.

Info Link with good demo video:

https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/tempestclock/tempest-chess-clock

UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS

For More Tournament Info Visit the USCF Tournament Site:
www.uschess.org/tlas/upcoming.php

Sept 12,19,26 2021 MIDTOWN ConSun QUADS NEW Tulsa OK

4-Player Round-Robin "Quads" (3 games); G/60+15. Tulsa Midtown Chess Club, at Harvard Ave Baptist Church, 17th and Harvard, Tulsa. Each player is placed in a "Quad" with three other players of similar rating, and plays one game per week. (If you can't make a Sunday, arrangements to play on another day can be made with opponent if approved by the tournament director.) EF: $10. PRIZES per entries (mostly this is a training tournament for rating). REGISTRATION: Sunday, Sept 12, 1:00-2:00pm. ROUNDS: 9/12 at 2:00pm, 9/19 and 9/26 at 1:45pm. No Byes, players should commit to play all games. Inquiries: tom.braunlich@cox.net Covid Restrictions: Currently masks or vaccinations recommended; play at your own risk. But check with www.ochess.org for possible changes in Covid policy. LS W.

Sept 25 OKC CHESS RAPIDS Oklahoma City OK

4-SS, G/45;+15. (Dual rated). St. John's Episcopal Church, 5401 N. Brookline, OKC, OK 73112. Three Sections: Open, Reserve(U1600), Booster(U1000). Cash Prizes: Open and Reserve: $200(Guaranteed) 1st each section, plus other cash prizes per entries. Booster: $100(Guaranteed) 1st plus medals. Rounds: 10am-12:30-3-5:30. Registration: 9-9:45am. Entry Fee: $25 top two sections and $20 for Booster for advance entries submitted by 9/23/2021 via www.ochess.org/OKCRapids — All $5 more at the door (cash or check only). BYES: One ½-point bye available Rds.1-3. Inquiries: tom.braunlich@cox.net Covid Restrictions: Currently masks or vaccinations recommended; play at your own risk. But check with www.ochess.org for possible changes in Covid policy. LS W.

Oct 9 -10 53rd JERRY SPANN MEMORIAL Tulsa OK

5-SS, G/90;+30. Site: Tulsa Holiday Inn CITY CENTER, 17 W. Seventh Street, Tulsa OK 74119. 918-585-5898. HR: $95. Three Sections: Open, Reserve (U1800), Novice (U1200). EF: $45 if mailed by 10/4, $55 thereafter, with these discounts: $10 off for Seniors over age 60, FREE for Masters 2200+ (deducted from winnings). Registration: 9-9:45am Sat 10/9. Prizes $$2000 (1st Prize Gtd. each section, rest b/55 paid entries): Open: $500(G)-200, X: 200, A: 175. Reserve (U1800): $250(G) C: 175 D: 175, Novice (U1200): $200(G), 1000/below: $125. Rounds: 10-2:30-7, 9-1:15. Byes: One 1/2-pt bye Rds. 1-5 if commit before Sat 9pm. Adv. Entries: www.paypal.me/Braunlich or mail T.Braunlich, 1638 S. Carson Ave.#803 Tulsa OK 74119. Info: tom.braunlich@cox.net. Website: ocfchess.org LS W. *CHECK prior to the tournaments for possible last-minute COVID virus policy changes.

Nov 13-14 5th FRANK K BERRY MEMORIAL Stroud OK

5-SS, G/90;+30. Site: Cattle Country Lodge, 1200 N 8th Ave, Stroud, OK 74079. (Turner Turnpike, Exit 179, then north 200 yards to other side of turnpike.) HR: $95. Three Sections: Open, Reserve (U1800), Novice (U1200). EF: $45 if mailed by 11/9, $55 thereafter, FREE for Masters 2200+ (deducted from winnings). Registration: 9-9:45am Sat 11/13. Prizes $$2200 (1st Prize Gtd. each section, rest b/55 paid entries): Open: $550(G)-250, X: 200, A: 200. Reserve (U1800): $250(G) C: 200 D: 200, Novice (U1200): $200(G), 1000/below: $150. Rounds: 10-2:30-7, 9-1:15. Byes: One 1/2-pt bye Rds. 1-5 if commit before Sat 9pm. Adv. Entries: www.paypal.me/Braunlich or mail T.Braunlich, 1638 S. Carson Ave.#803 Tulsa OK 74119. Info: tom.braunlich@cox.net. Website: ocfchess.org LS W. *CHECK prior to the tournaments for possible last-minute COVID virus policy changes.

Dec 18 Annual Holiday Open Tulsa OK

4-SS, Rapid Chess. Details TBA